

KEHOE'S CORNER

News from the office of Senator Christine Kehoe



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Committees

Local Government, Chair
Budget and Fiscal Review
Energy, Utilities
and Communications

Natural Resources & Water
Transportation & Housing
Joint Committee on
Homeland Security and
Emergency Services, Chair

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California joins in aiding hurricane victims

Like all of you, I am concerned about the residents of the Gulf Coast who have been so profoundly affected by Hurricane Katrina. The region has been hit terribly hard, and every citizen is in need of our attention and generous support.

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) has activated the State Operations Center and is in contact with the states of Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi and Florida to identify needs that California might be able to meet. California is working hard to assist with the hurricane crisis, and has deployed the following resources to the scene:

- 8 Swiftwater Rescue Teams (112 firefighters and lifeguards)
- 8 Urban Search & Rescue Task Forces (528 people)
- 30 Incident Support Team Managers
- 3 OES Assistant Fire Chiefs
- 6 Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (210 people)
- 730 National Guard soldiers and airmen
- 122 California Highway Patrol Officers with 4 helicopters who left on 9/4
- (Information current as of September 7)

For more information on what California is doing for victims of Hurricane Katrina, go to www.oes.ca.gov.

Members of San Diego's Urban Search-and-Rescue Taskforce left on August 31 for the Gulf Coast to provide assistance. In addition, a variety of first responders and military personnel from San Diego have gone to the area. I am proud that San Diegans are lending a hand to those Americans who are in such great need.

The State of California Operations Center is coordinating with FEMA regarding preparation for receiving evacuees into the state (primary sites are San Diego, San Francisco and San Jose). Dozens of evacuees have already arrived. All hurricane survivors must register with FEMA for appropriate aid at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or www.fema.gov

HOW TO HELP KATRINA SURVIVORS

I've heard from many of you who would like to help. Here's information that may help you.

- The American Red Cross is seeking donations to help pay for relief efforts in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. You can make a donation by calling 1-800-435-7669 or visiting www.redcross.org.
- Other charities are accepting in-kind donations of food, clothing, etc. Check with your favorite charity to see if they are collecting items for hurricane victims.
- If you would like to volunteer, please call 1-800-733-2767 or email sandiego.volunteer@sdarc.org.

Legislative update

The Legislature has adjourned for this year. We now return to our districts to continue to work on measures for next year that are in the best interests of our constituents.

Governor Schwarzenegger has until October 9 to sign or veto bills passed by the legislature. These are bills that I carried this year that are waiting for the Governor's signature:

- SB 373 - County water authority: encroachments
- SB 502 - Weed and vegetation management.
- SB 518 - Homeowners' insurance
- SB 695 - Conservation easement registry
- SB 707 - Before and after school programs
- SB 1037 - Energy Efficiency
- SB 1067 - Safe Drinking water
- SB 1070 - Water quality information
- SB 1084 - Forest practices.
- SJR 11 - "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy
- SB 816 - San Diego Net Metering (signed into law)

Get detailed information on any of these bills by going to my website at www.senate.ca.gov/Kehoe and clicking on the bill number.

By doing this, you will have access to the bill language, who has voted for or against the measure, and what the status of the measure is.



Senator Kehoe talks about issues of equality at the Capitol in early 2005

California stands up for marriage equality

The California Legislature made history by becoming the first state in the nation to pass equal marriage rights legislation for same-sex couples. However, Governor Schwarzenegger has stated that he will veto the bill.

I supported this measure because every Californian deserves equal protection and equal rights under our law. For the first time in our nation's history, the people's elected

representatives have taken a stand to protect all families and ensure equality for all.

This vote comes on the heels of a new poll by the Public Policy Institute of California that shows likely California voters are equally split, 46% to 46% on the issue of civil marriage for same-sex couples. This represents a shift in voter attitudes towards support for marriage equality.

Proposition 22, which said that California would not be required to recognize same-sex marriages from other states, would not be affected by this legislation. Further, California Superior Court Judge Kramer deemed Proposition 22 unconstitutional earlier this year.

For more information, visit the website of Equality California, which sponsored this legislation, at www.eqca.org.

"For the first time in our nation's history, the people's elected representatives have taken a stand to protect all families and ensure equality for all."

Eminent domain hearings to be held

When the United States Supreme Court recently decided that a Connecticut town could take homes in the name of economic development, countless American homeowners became rightfully nervous. There was talk between neighbors about "defending my home no matter what." I received many calls with reactions from every side.

This issue is not as simple as it seems. It is a complex law where no doubt there have been abuses that we need to remedy, but there has also been redevelopment for the public good that

has transformed entire neighborhoods that otherwise would not have taken place. Horton Plaza, San Diego's East Village, and City Heights Urban Village are good examples of what has worked. California state law requires that there be both *physical* and *economic* blight before the possible use of eminent domain even be considered. It involves a lengthy public hearing process.

The California Legislature must be cautious about changing our private property rights. If we alter the State Constitution, as

some suggest, there will be serious unintended consequences. As Chair of the Senate Local Government Committee, I will be holding hearings in October and November to hear more from property owners and policy makers.

I want us to work rationally to see where abuses may be occurring and seek to address specific problems.

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Intern Spotlight: Lemon Grove resident Eric Dang

Eric Dang is one of those valued individuals who recently volunteered to intern in my office not to fulfill a class requirement, but out of a desire to gain some insight into the political process.

This summer, Eric interned three days a week, and helped with

everything from constituent concerns, to telephone calls and legislative research.

Eric, who grew up in Lemon Grove, California, now attends University of California, Berkeley, where he is going into his senior year as a Political Science major.

Active in student government, Eric is a member of the Student Action Political Party, which represents all students on campus.

Thanks for your hard work Eric!



Summer intern Eric Dang

Contact Information

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United States Senate Youth Program scholarships available

I am pleased to announce that the California Department of Education is coordinating the 44th Annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP).

This annual scholarship competition is funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation and

endorsed by the United States Senate.

Each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia select two high school juniors or seniors to participate in the USSYP.

The delegates receive a \$5,000 college scholarship and attend a

one-week, all expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. from March 4-11, 2006.

The deadline to apply is October 1, 2005. For more details, go to:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/ce/us/index.asp>

Brochures and California Constitution books available!

Various brochures as well as California Constitution books are now available to you for free from my office. Brochure topics include:

- Medi-Cal Senior Fact Sheet
- Veterans Resource Guide
- Identity Theft
- Prescription Drug Discount Program for Medicare Recipients
- A Citizen's Guide to Lobbying

If you would like a free copy, please contact my office at (619) 645-3133 or Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov.



Senator Kehoe meets with students of YMCA Youth Government